

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /085 W

-----038680 180844Z /13

R 180540Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4397

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 0769

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: JA UR PINT PEPR

SUBJECT: FOOTNOTE TO FONMIN SONODA'S VISIT TO MOSCOW: BREZHNEV'S
ILLNESS AND POLYANSKII'S NON-PARTICIPATION

REF: TOKYO 0722

1. DURING COURSE OF CONVERSATION ON SONODA'S RECENT TALKS IN MOSCOW (REFTEL), FONOFF 1ST EAST EUROPE DIVDIR TOGO NOTED THAT IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO VISIT SOVIETS HAD INDICATED TO FONOFF THAT SONODA WOULD BE UNABLE TO MEET EVEN BRIEFLY WITH BREZHNEV DESPITE STRONG EXPRESSIONS OF JAPANESE INTEREST IN SUCH MEETING. DURING MOSCOW TALKS, GROMYKO PERSONALLY EXPLAINED TO JAPANESE FONMIN THAT BREZHNEV HAD BEEN SUFFERING FROM FLU IN RECENT WEEKS. SHORTLY AFTER NEW YEAR'S DAY SOVIET LEADER HAD ATTENDED SEVERAL PUBLIC FUNCTIONS AGAINST HIS DOCTORS' ADVICE AND HAD SUFFERED FORM OF RELAPSE. CONSEQUENTLY, BREZHNEV WAS NOW UNDER FIRM DOCTORS' ORDERS TO AVOID SUCH EXERTIONS FOR NEXT FEW WEEKS. GROMYKO ASSURED SONODA, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD FULLY BRIEFED BREZHNEV ON COURSE OF TALKS BY TELEPHONE.

2. TOGO ALSO OBSERVED THAT CONTRARY TO USUAL PRACTICE, AMBASSADOR POLYANSKII RESIDENT IN TOKYO HAD NOT RETURNED
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TO MOSCOW TO PARTICIPATE IN FREIGH MINISTERS' MEETINGS. SOVIETS HAD NOT OFFERED ANY EXPLANATION FOR POLYANSKII'S FAILURE TO ATTEND. BASED ON RELATIVELY PROPER SOVIET BEHAVIOR DURING SONODA'S VISIT, TOGO SUSPECTED THAT BACKGROUND OF POLYANSKII'S NON-PARTICIPATION MIGHT LIE LESS WITH STATE OF SOVIET-JAPAN RELATIONS THAN WITH SOME POSSIBLE "AWKWARDNESS" IN POLYANSKII'S OWN RELATIONSHIP

WITH KREMLIN LEADERSHIP.

3. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, LOCAL SOVIET
EMBASSY COUNSELOR KOMAROVSKII TOOK PAINS TO DENY ANY
DIPLOMATIC SIGNIFICANCE TO POLYANSKII'S NON-
PARTICIPATION IN TALKS. AMBASSADOR, HE STATED, HAD NOT
RETURNED TO MOSCOW BECAUSE OF "HIS BUSY SCHEDULE IN
TOKYO."
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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 18 jan 1978
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